

THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER

JUNE 1950

Vol. I No. 6

THE DEAD-POINT IN
SOCIAL POLICY

•

THE UNDERSTANDING
OF HISTORY

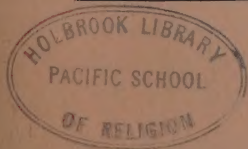
•

YOUTH OFF DUTY

•

THE COCKTAIL PARTY

Michael Foster . Leonard England
C. Witton Davies . Ralph Coward



BASIL BLACKWELL • OXFORD

How Came Our Faith

W. A. L. ELMSLIE

'Nobody could read this work without constant intellectual and spiritual profit.'

CANON CHARLES SMYTH *in* THE SPECTATOR

'I know of no book that brings out more clearly that the study of the Old Testament is a living concern I warmly recommend it to ministers and laymen.'

T. W. M. *in* THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

Second impression. 21s. net

The Making of the English Protestant Tradition

E. G. RUPP

'One of the most important contributions to the history of the English Reformation that have been published in recent years.'

CHURCH TIMES

'Seasoned with the salt of a wit which makes it a pleasure to read.'

CHURCH QUARTERLY REVIEW

Second impression. 10s. 6d. net

The Religious Orders in England

DAVID KNOWLES

Professor Knowles's history of the monks and friars in England from 1216 to about 1340 is now available again. 'A major event in the progress of medieval studies.'

CHURCH TIMES

Second impression. 35s. net

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CONSTABLE

**Principles
of Human Geography**

By VIDAL DE LA BLACHE

20s.

"Here we have a wealth of facts, examined and classified and explained . . . Just the kind of study to give to many who are teaching geography along modern lines the right kind of atmosphere in which to approach and expound the subject."

Education Outlook

**Mont-Saint-Michel
and Chartres**

By HENRY ADAMS

20s.

A most distinguished contribution to literature and a most valuable adjunct to the study of mediaevalism.

The Golden Shakespeare

AN ANTHOLOGY

15s.

"Logan Pearsall Smith loved Shakespeare, and his anthology may come to be regarded as the biggest of his achievements."

Manchester Guardian

10 ORANGE STREET LONDON W.C. 2

A History of Philosophy

(VOL. II: MEDIAEVAL PHILOSOPHY—AUGUSTINE
TO SCOTUS)

by *F. C. Copleston*

"This like his first volume, is full, careful, and judicious . . . Brings out the variety of thinking which could be combined with unity in religious faith"—MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

Demy 8vo.

600 pp.

25s.

(Uniform with VOL. I: GREECE AND ROME. 18s.)

Early Christian Baptism and the Creed

by *J. H. Crehan*

"The theme is theologically an interesting one, and the author develops it with acuteness and a wealth of patristic learning . . . will undoubtedly command attention among scholars"—LIFE OF FAITH.

Demy 8vo.

21s.

Catholicism

A STUDY OF DOGMA IN RELATION TO THE
CORPORATE DESTINY OF MANKIND

by *Henri de Lubac*

A study of the Christian foundations to the social fabric of contemporary Western civilization, by a noted French theologian.

Demy 8vo.

16s.

BURNS OATES

28 ASHLEY PLACE, S.W. 1

The Frontier

published monthly in continuation of
the work of

The Christian News-Letter

Annual Subscription £1 : Single Copies 2/-

All Correspondence about Subscriptions to the Publisher
BASIL BLACKWELL, 49 Broad Street, Oxford

All Letters to THE EDITORS to be addressed to
The Frontier, 21 Essex Street, Strand, W.C. 2

*Printed for Basil Blackwell, 49 Broad Street, by The Church Army Press,
Cowley, Oxford.*

CONTENTS

NOTES OF THE MONTH	- - - -	203
<i>The "Dead Point" in Social Policy</i>		
INTERIM	- - - -	212
<i>Bishop Ordass Deposed—Signs of Change in Social Policy—Refugees and the Danger of Revolution—For Visitors to Sweden—Fighters against the Traffic in Vice</i>		
THE UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORY	- -	216
By Michael Foster		
YOUTH OFF DUTY	- - - -	223
By Leonard England		
"THE COCKTAIL PARTY"	- - - -	229
By P. M.		
REVIEWS	- - - -	235
<i>Everyman's Talmud—From the Ground Up</i>		
LETTERS TO THE EDITORS	- - -	238
From F. H. Amphlett Micklewright and J. M. Ross		

OUR NEW CONTRIBUTORS

MICHAEL FOSTER is at present a Professor in Cologne University. He is returning to England in September to resume his work as Tutor in Philosophy at Christ Church, Oxford.

LEONARD ENGLAND is Director of Mass-Observation, the research organization. He writes on youth as one who is still himself the right side of thirty.

C. WITTON-DAVIES is the Dean of St. David's, Pembrokeshire and was from 1944-49 Adviser on Judaism to the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem.

RALPH COWARD, a farmer in Dorsetshire, is a member of the Council for the Church and Countryside.

THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE
COMMON LIFE

Vol. I. No. 6.

JUNE 1950

Notes of the Month

IT is bad for a country facing its supreme economic crisis if its governors are thinking all the time whether the electorate will like what they do. That was considered a great reason for hurrying on the recent election; but it is a condition which the electors' decision, or lack of it, did less than nothing to remove. The new parliament is too evenly divided to support any policy of a very controversial kind, though that may be a smaller misfortune than some critics seem to think. More of the management of the country devolves on permanent ministerial officials in such a case and proceeds by their established usages; less is determined by reasons of state or social policy. While this creates uncertainties and a temptation to drift in some departments, in others it may not turn out to have been a bad thing; it is a situation that can hardly last very long, and we should get over it no better or quicker by seeking to end it for the sake of doing so. We shall make the worst of it if party statesmen are, as is alleged, using the interim too largely in jockeying for a starting position in the next electoral contest, nor would such a political spectacle help the country to make up its at present divided mind. Meanwhile party politicians had better not be too eager to bring about a crisis in which they think their own side would have the more "popular" policy; if they were believed to have done this

it might not have at all the effect they had expected. At a time of such indecision, honesty is all the more likely to be the best policy.

The Political Dead-point

The parliamentary deadlock must be recognized as more than a mere political accident. It happens when the phase called "recovery" is ended, before our place in the new postwar world is clear; and it coincides with a change of mood; men are reconsidering their situation and revising their ideas. In every complicated job of work we reach certain dead-points, when we have done as much as is practical in a certain direction, with the plans we had for doing it, and cannot immediately see how to go on. The last ten years have been a time of extraordinary activity for Britain, both in world affairs and in social reconstruction. So much has happened to us and we have put forth such unexampled efforts in so many directions, that the situation we have to deal with is changed, as well as the means at our disposal. Most important of all, the aims and ideas that we held have either been realized so far as circumstances allow, or no longer apply. At such a moment it is not in the least unnatural to find oneself in a mood of irresolution for anything more than routine, day-to-day decisions. And it is of little use to insist that the urgency of the situation or some menace in the future—such as the end of Marshall Aid, the onset of Japanese competition or the defence of Europe against Communism—demands of us an immediate, large and imaginative commitment. Certainly there are pressing urgencies. But effective action depends upon vision, and there are times when we can only be dragged along by the course of events unless we first decide what we want, upon what principles we seek it, and whether we still believe in those principles. That we have come to such a time is particularly evident in foreign relations; but we shall confine our remarks here to home affairs.

The Need for New Directives

In social policy the principles upon which we used to argue cases seem to be losing their practical meaning. Both the Conservatives, the first principle of whose tradition is not to be unworthy of the past, and the Socialists whose ideals are projected into the future, are perplexed before the demands of the present. This is more evident, though it is not more true, in the case of the Socialists than in their rivals ; for the recent set-back in the popularity of their régime was preceded, and may have been partly caused, by signs of misgiving among their leaders. To understand this it is essential to remember how superficial the "totalitarian" influence always was in British socialism, which drew most of its spirit and its ideas from practical co-operative movements and Christian groups with a humane concern for the industrial poor. At the beginning of this century, when Labour decided to aim at governmental power, there was something of a suppressed crisis in its ranks, for the movement inherited much of the old, healthy liberal mistrust of state power. The decision was however inevitable : there were too many crying evils which could be quickly relieved in no other way, and the argument for taking power to do so by centralized control was always irresistible. Throughout its rise to power, the Labour party therefore proceeded upon two main directives, easily understood by the ordinary citizen—the provision of social services and benefits equally for all, financed by taxing incomes deemed to be socially unjustifiable, and the nationalization of industries. Not until 1945 was the Party in a position to try to put these principles into practice as far and as fast as feasible ; and in five years it has effected a very considerable equalization of incomes, abolished destitution altogether and nationalized several of the main services, whilst the country as a whole has been making substantial progress towards recovery. But that the advance could not be pressed much farther upon these two simple directives was evident from some of the effects, and was evidently suspected by some of the Party

leaders. A democratic government cannot press its policies far in advance of public support for them, especially if the cost exceeds all expectation and has to be met by increasing taxation and extending it throughout all classes of society. Democracy depends at least in some degree upon voluntary financial co-operation from the citizens, and those classes which had responded well to the appeal to save money showed a disquieting tendency to spend their savings. These difficulties, and that of an apparent decline in the popularity of nationalization, are of a political and practical nature. But there is a more important reason why the most conscientious Labour statesmen hesitate to proceed with a social programme shaped strictly on the principle of equalizing incomes. The historic strength of their movement lies in a concern for human welfare which was rooted in a Christian conception of personality and brotherhood. But it is becoming evident that to pursue justice and welfare in narrowly economic terms tends to de-personalize relations; that is, to treat human beings as if they were a collection of impersonal units.

The Present Discontents

One illustration of this is given in the recurrent revolts of the workers in the docks. Few if any sections of labour have profited more from the efforts of the Labour Government to improve their conditions. By making their employment regular, whereas it was merely casual, the reorganization has abolished the insecurity which was the dockers' greatest grievance; and by setting up a Government Board to settle all conflicts between their Union and their employers, it has assured them of an impartial arbiter, as attentive to their interests as to those of their employers, whilst their earnings have been much increased. Yet all this has done little or nothing to prevent outbreaks of discontent; and inquiry has shown that the measures taken to secure the men's economic welfare have made their social situation as workers in an important respect worse than it was. Instead

of direct contact with their employers, they stand in a dual relation to the employers and the governing Board. This has weakened the dockers' reliance on their trade union official; and as the new conditions of "decasualized" labour often put a man to work with different mates under different overseers from day to day, the nett psychological effect is to make the worker's status more individual and less personal than before. It is a fact of human nature that men like to work as members of a team; industrial psychologists are pretty well agreed that groups with permanence enough to get used to one another and some means of corporate expression are normally necessary to industrial contentment. The dockers' case is not an isolated example of the effects of recent social policy; it is in fact representative of complaints that are arising in all directions from the unforeseen effects of the new laws and administration. Workers of all grades and kinds are uneasily conscious of being reduced to numbered units in masses, with responsibility not to anyone they see, but to remote bodies of controllers acting upon impersonal, abstract rules and regulations. Whatever makes a man feel like that makes him unsocial or even anti-social; and socialist Ministers cannot become aware of this without pausing to think again.

The Task of Conservation

The "dead point" in social policy would not necessarily be overcome by the Conservative régime which it might help to bring to power. In the traditional Conservative view, the sphere of operation of the state is limited: it is only one function among others; and Conservatives are opposed in principle to the centralizing of economic, cultural and other affairs in state departments. Ideally, they think of society as a loyal association of voluntary and self-governing institutions and a free field for individual competition under the law: but in the changing patterns of society created by what men are actually doing, these principles are much harder to act upon than those of state regula-

tion, especially if there is any hurry. The reforms lately carried out by Labour had been very largely approved by Conservatives in the previous Coalition, and subsequent re-statements of their own plans have expressed less of the principles to which they have traditionally been attached than of political necessities they now feel obliged to recognize. This has given many people the impression that they would follow in practice much the same general line as their rivals, but with reluctance and more caution. Yet there is much truth in the opinion, urged by so liberal a thinker as Peter Drucker, that the social task of the Western nations in the present epoch is essentially one of conservation—conservation of the family; of regional and racial autonomies; of human skills, traditions and institutions; of natural resources and of the soil itself. The conservation that this implies is however the defence and culture of values in a world where both the circumstances and the only effective means of meeting them are in continual change. It is naturally harder for conservative minds than for others to square their thought with the facts of change. If socialism, by too simply going along with the changes, is in danger of causing results that are the reverse of social; conservatism is in the spiritual danger of cherishing an idealism unrelated to its practical action. In both cases the ideas of the past have been pressed about as far as they will go.

Security is not enough

Ideas that are no longer adequate have not to be repudiated but surpassed. What has been accomplished in Britain since 1945 is the culmination, though not the completion, of an immense remedial labour with a long history behind it. It represents the most conscious and conscientious effort made by any nation to distribute the benefits and counteract the evils of a scientific and technical progress which no people could contract out of, even if it wished, for in our epoch material progress is the power and the pride of the human race, but also its crucifixion, ruthlessly despoiling

values that it is in the vital interests of the race to conserve ; and in this sense our socialist movements, too, represent efforts of conservation. Society having been disrupted by industrial capitalism, the first necessity for the disinherited masses was that they should be fed, clothed, housed and occupied in ways that re-connect them to society. That had to be done, even if we could not contrive the best possible way of doing it : and it would be not only politically impossible but morally unscrupulous to try to go back on that course. We must go forward from it, after frankly confessing that, whatever earnest and public-spirited efforts have contributed to it, our solution was largely dictated by self-defence and limited to lines of least resistance. We always found it so much easier to raise money by taxation, or even inflation, and to set up bureaucratic institutions for relief, displacing the privately organized charities which, as they grew in scale, tended to become almost as impersonal. But that recipe for relief is losing its efficacy. We cannot rely much further upon remedies as impersonal in action as the blind forces of change from which they were meant to protect people, for the society they would bring into existence is manifestly unstable. Men will revolt and destroy it, unless, having assured material and individual security to all, it brings them into the social relations in which personality is fulfilled.

The New Direction

This is not to say that material welfare has been sufficiently achieved—far from it. But it is by an effort in another direction that the whole future of social welfare now needs to be secured. We wait for a fresh directive idea, not yet translated into working terms, but already conceived and pressing for recognition. Now, no less than two generations ago, thinkers and theorists are shaping the thought which will rule the social policies of the time to come and their thought is personalist. But there are now—as two generations ago there were not—many institutions

pursuing sociological studies with unprecedented means of practical observation. And here, where so many of the administrators of the future are being trained, the direction of interest is also increasingly personalistic. In such seminars as the London School of Economics and Nuffield College we find students becoming less exclusively concerned with the production and distribution of material welfare and more with the accompanying psychological conditions—that is, with personal relations in homes, at work and at play ; and with the states of minds and feelings they produce.

The Conscience of Industry

With the men of action it is the same. Recently a group of industrial managers and trades unionists met under the auspices of the Christian Frontier Council for a preliminary survey of the most urgent needs that are at present evident in British industry, and they put their conclusions on record in the following propositions.

(1) We start with the conviction that in industry, no less than in all our lives, we must recognize, rebuild and constantly care about relations between persons. As Christians we believe that it is in these personal relations that we discover what it means to be members of the Body of Christ. We go further and say that, if there is to be this relationship between all engaged in industry, men must realize the relationship in which they stand to God.

(2) We have also been made aware how much industrial society needs help in the basic task of living and working together. This, and not the technique of industry, is the province of the churches and especially of their members in industry. We have been made aware how much the churches have to learn about the real needs of industrial society. Industry and the churches need each other, and they must begin by learning more about each other.

(3) We are faced, therefore, with a problem of communication, i.e., of bringing persons together. "A common purpose in industry" is the title of our meeting. "Purpose" raises the question of ends : "common" that of means. Both need our attention. But

any conclusion about either will be false unless there is communication between all who are concerned with them.

(4) Therefore we propose the following :—

(a) That opportunities should be taken to encourage regular meetings, as a normal part of the Christian life, between ministers in any locality and those locally engaged in industry. This is nothing more than the use of existing resources in parish, city and the wider community where the problem first emerges. These resources should be used not occasionally but continually.

(b) That, to supplement the existing methods of communication, a few men and women of first-rate ability and mature experience in this field should be seconded for a period of time by the churches, chiefly from among their ordained members, for special work in the industrial field.

(c) That at the national level regular opportunities should be made for discussion and action between the leaders in industry and in the churches.

(d) That an independent institution or centre is needed where Christian men in the professional or lay service of the churches can meet those engaged in industry ; where friendships can be developed and knowledge shared ; which can serve as a base for the work of the specialists proposed in (b) and be a place where new ideas and experiments are digested ; and from which, in due course and through a better understanding of what is involved ; guidance can go out to the wider circle of those who are concerned with these problems both in industry and in the churches.

Seen against this background, the present hiatus in politics appears like the moment of calm that falls when the wind is changing ; or like a halt of indecision at crossroads, to be employed in reading the signposts and unfolding the map. For all socialist reformers it is a moment also for remembering whence they started and with what golden hopes. As Martin Buber has just reminded them, the goal they set out to reach bears all too little resemblance to things that social reform is now attaining, not only in degree but even in kind. By a whole cloud of witnesses they are being exhorted, like the Church of Ephesus, to return to their first love and to do the first works.

INTERIM

Bishop Ordass deposed

Bishop Lewis Ordass of the Hungarian Lutheran Church, who was sentenced on October 1st, 1948, to two years' imprisonment for an alleged infringement of the Laws of the Hungarian State, was on April 1st, 1950, deposed from his office as bishop by a special disciplinary court of the Hungarian Lutheran Church. The proceedings of this court have been kept secret, and only its decision has been published. The Lutheran World Federation, whose headquarters are at Geneva, is not at all satisfied that justice has been done to Bishop Ordass, and has addressed a letter to the Inspector General of the Hungarian Lutheran Church in which it gives anxious expression to its misgivings and argues that considerations of expediency have been allowed to override justice. Bishop Berggrav of Norway has also addressed an open letter to the Lutheran Church of Hungary, in which he protests against the secrecy in which it has shrouded its proceedings. "Surely," he says, "we Norwegian Lutherans know how difficult, yes indeed, how impossible it is for those standing at a distance to understand just what is going on in a country where there is a revolution under a one-party system. But it is very difficult to abstain from judgement if one's heart is deeply engaged, as in this case in Hungary."

Signs of Change in Social Policy

More than one correspondent draws our attention to signs of impending change in Labour Party policy—change not merely tactical, but of social outlook. This would be in the direction of less centrally managed and a more co-operative socialism. There are many reasons for this development, which is not caused, though probably stimulated, by the Co-operative movement. The Co-operatives did not think nationalisation should be applied to them, but were apprehensive that it might be; and the decision of the Labour Party last November not to "nationalise" but only to "mutualise" Insurance was doubtless partly due to their influence which is likely to go much further.

The Co-operative Party's statement of policy, *Building the New Britain*, proposed that the possibility of organizing industries not suitable for nationalization along the lines of the co-operative co-partnership societies should be thoroughly examined. It was endorsed by a large majority at the Party's Annual Conference at Easter. The Co-operative Union's statement *The Co-operative Movement in a Collective Economy* went as far as demanding that the Labour Party should

"declare authoritatively that the co-operative system of production and distribution is one based upon common ownership within the meaning of the Party's constitution" and that the Co-operative Movement should be fully consulted before any detailed decisions are reached in respect of Industrial Assurance, Meat Wholesaling and Sugar production and refining.

* * * * *

At the same time the Trade Unions are pressing for the "rigorous" and "stricter" limitation of dividends, demanding that dividend limitation should be made not only statutory but permanent; that the co-operative principle of a limited return on capital should be written into company law. That is to say, they are demanding that other industries besides insurance should be "mutualized", that industry generally should be organized on a co-operative basis. Meanwhile the Party organizers in the country are critical of the policy of the party a good many votes at the last election. The Co-operative Movement, the Trades Unions and the Party Organization are thus all tending to steer the Labour Movement towards a co-operative interpretation of socialism. It may take time for these tendencies to make themselves felt, but it is quite likely that the next phase of Labour policy will tend to revive in new forms the co-operative ideas of Robert Owen and the Christian Socialists, and the kindred ideas of the Guild Socialists.

* * * * *

Refugees and the danger of Revolution

Under the title "The Rebellion of the Disinherited" the Stuttgart weekly *Christ und Welt* of April 27 published an arresting account of the political undercurrents among the nine million refugees of Western Germany, as mirrored in a number of recent refugee publications and periodicals. First some figures showing the "social degradation" of the refugee population were given. Refugees represent 18 per cent of the total population in Western Germany, but only 3 per cent of the students at Western German universities are refugees. Only 5 per cent of the refugees are active in normal professions and trades. They make up 40 per cent of the total unemployed. In Schleswig-Holstein 93 per cent of refugees in regular employment earn less than 200 marks (£17 at the current rate) a month. An article by the Sudeten German refugee sociologist Prof. Lemberg in *The Voice of the Refugees* (*Die*

Stimme der Vertriebenen) under the title "The Class War of Tomorrow" discusses the possibilities of a combined revolution of the refugees and the "depressed class" of the 25-40 generation in Western Germany.

"However the individual may have been affected, in their great mass the refugees from Eastern Germany are social *déclassés*. In the new society they find themselves graded several degrees lower down the scale than at home. They can find no *entrée* unto the social circles of their new locality. They constitute a society of their own, a society of the unrecognized and the excluded, a fifth estate. As such they are not fighting merely for rights and material goods but for recognition and self-respect. . . . in the mass they have been made into proletarians and the same tensions and forces which gave the proletariat such an enormous revolutionary impetus are alive in them and are pressing to find expression in a revolutionary idea. . . . Anyone who knows the eager generation of those between 25 and 40, knows that it is thoroughly critical of the Nazism and nationalism of the last decades. But it has its own ideas of the structure of a democratic society. The class of refugees from the East is just as critical of the present party set-up and even more interested in the idea of a new democratic order. When the new generation takes over the two groups will be natural allies. Both are at present excluded from real influence. All that is needed to reduce both groups to a common denominator is an easily understandable programme, a target, an ideal which envisages society based on a new structure."

All the "pariahs of the German destiny" would no doubt join a "party of the disinherited", of which the refugees would form the nucleus: the maimed of the last war, returning prisoners of war, women whose husbands were killed, are missing or still prisoners, the victims of the currency reform, the army of the "denazified" and all the millions of unemployed. The "Deutsche Gemeinschaft" which is at present making great efforts to organize into a political party all those "injured by the war" may well prove the rallying point for all the other "pariahs". It is already represented at Bonn by Dr. Franz Ott, a Sudeten German Lutheran pastor. There is little danger of a pro-Communist movement arising from the ranks of the refugees but there is the danger of nihilism and anarchy and a "tendency to throw themselves into the arms of a new totalitarianism". If this danger is to be circumvented the refugee problem must speedily be recognized and dealt with as a European and as a world problem that it is not within Germany's sole power to solve.

For Visitors to Sweden

An international and ecumenical summer school will be held at Upplands-Väsby, which is situated on Lake Mälaren, twenty-four kilometres north of Stockholm. It will begin on July 14th and continue for about five weeks. English will be the chief language used and visitors from Britain will be welcome. The members of the school will do work on the land as well as have the opportunity of hearing lectures on a wide variety of subjects and of making excursions to places of historic and cultural interest. The school is intended mainly for teachers, social workers, and students. Last year seventeen countries were represented in the school. It is organized by Örjansgården (St. George's Court), and further information can be had from the Rektor, Örjansgården, Vrigstad, Sweden.

Fighters against the Traffic in Vice

An international meeting in London on the 7th of this month will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the International Abolitionist Federation. The foreign visitors will foregather under the auspices of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, which is their "parent society" whose history goes back to 1869, when Josephine Butler was conducting her heroic and triumphant crusade against the Contagious Diseases Acts which then threatened Victorian England with a system for the state regulation of vice. In its seventy-five years the Genevan Federation has won many hard battles against the state patronage of prostitution and the traffic in women and children that it promotes; and since the recent triumphs in France and the creation, under the U.N.O., of a special International Convention for the furtherance of its aims, a statement of the Federation's main successes has been issued and made available to all. Dr. Droin and Madame Legrand Falco, who brought the recent fight in France to its hopeful consummation, will be among the European guests; and friends of the cause who would like to attend the luncheon at the St. Ermin's Hotel should write to the Secretary of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene at Livingstone House, Broadway, S.W. 1.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORY

TWO instructive and enlightening books have recently been written on the relation between Christianity and Civilisation: Professor Brunner's *Christianity and Civilisation* and Christopher Dawson's *Religion and Culture*.¹ One book is by a theologian, the other by an historian and philosopher of history, so that there are differences of treatment and point of view; but there is a remarkable agreement between the main themes of both books. Both demonstrate the importance of religion as a basis of civilization and both carry the conviction, whether expressed or implicit, that only a revival of religious faith can rescue our present civilization from destruction.

A sentence quoted on the jacket of Mr. Dawson's book gives its keynote: "Religion is the dynamic element in culture". His first volume was devoted to showing that this connection holds generally between religion and culture, and he illustrated it by examples from the major religions of the world. In his second volume, he gives a concrete application of his thesis by tracing the influence of Christianity in the historical development of Mediaeval civilization.

Professor Brunner's approach is rather philosophical than historical. He sets out to show that the Christian faith delivers the metaphysical presuppositions upon which civilization must be based; or, better, as he himself expresses it in his preface to the first volume, "to formulate and to justify my conviction that only Christianity is capable of furnishing the basis of a civilization which can rightly be described as human".

Both authors are committed by the terms of their thesis

¹ E. Brunner, Gifford Lectures, *Christianity and Civilization*, First Part: *Foundations* 1947; Second Part *Specific Problems* 1948; published by Nisbet, 10s. each.

Christopher Dawson, Gifford Lectures, *Religion and Culture* 1947, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* 1948; published by Sheed and Ward, 10s. 6d. and 15s. respectively.

to opposing the Marxist doctrine that only material causes are effective in producing civilizations, while religions are only ideological reflections of material facts.

Both authors are in agreement, too, in rejecting the view that a secular civilization can grow from its own roots. This view, as Professor Toynbee illuminatingly remarked in a broadcast review of Dawson's book, would have been commonly taken for granted fifty years ago. An author writing at that date on the subject of Religion and Culture would almost certainly have regarded religion as a force restraining the development of culture. Culture, it would have been assumed, had to throw off the shackles of religion before it could grow unhampered. Both the authors whom I have mentioned maintain the exact opposite of this. Dawson's historical second volume is designed to show in detail how the culture of Mediaeval Europe was formed by Christian influences. Brunner's approach is not historical in this sense. He is concerned rather to show that Christianity supplies the indispensable presupposition (in a logical sense) of civilization, than that it has been its historical cause. Nevertheless, he does believe also that the civilization of the West has been a Christian civilization, that it has owed its distinctive character to Christian influences, that its existence is now and has been for some time endangered as a result of the progressive estrangement from Christianity which has characterized the spiritual history of the last centuries in the West.

This new standpoint, compared with the secular standpoint of fifty years ago, seems to me a clear gain in point of truth. It gives a fresh vision of the civilization in which we live, and innumerable aspects of its history and of its present are set in a new and truer light by it. I must make a special acknowledgment to both books for new light on many things. Nevertheless I venture to suggest the question whether even this standpoint is the true standpoint for a Christian historian, and whether a more radical change still is not required.

Two things seem noteworthy :

(i) The change of view which these books represent has been general throughout the modern world. The secular optimism, which trusted in the power of civilization to go on growing from its own roots, has yielded to a deepening realization of the debt which Western Civilization owed to Christianity, and to a widespread belief that only a revival of Christianity can preserve this civilization. This realization is shared by non-Christians ; and it seems that non-Christians also sometimes share the conviction that a revival of Christianity would be the best, if not the only, way of saving civilization.

(ii) This change of view has not been accompanied by a growth of hope. Certainly in the general mind it seems to have gone together with a change from hope to despair. Secular optimism has given way to secular despair, but not necessarily to Christian hope. In these two books there seems to me a similar deficiency of hope.

In this I am not referring to personal attitudes and beliefs. A writer's personal belief may be one thing, but the attitude implicit in his writing may be another. Thus, for example, we should hardly regard as wholly Christian the optimistic belief in secular progress which informed much historical writing of the last century ; but in their persons and in their lives the authors of such writings may well have been better Christians than writers who see history in a more truly Christian perspective. What I am suggesting of these two books is that their understanding of the past and of the present is not one which gives rise organically to hope.

Such a statement will no doubt arouse objections. I imagine the objection that history is one thing and hope another. " The understanding of the past " (it will be said) " is a matter for historians to settle by objective principles of historical judgement, while hope is a matter of religion. Historical understanding of the past and diagnosis of the

present are things which Christians and non-Christians have in common. *The same diagnosis* which is a basis of despair for the non-Christian will be a basis of hope for the Christian, because he has faith in God. But the Christian must be a realist in accepting the diagnosis of objective history. It would be a form of wishful thinking if he were to attempt to cook the history of the past in such a way that it would lead on to his hope for the future."

No doubt there is, or well might be, a form of cooking history against which this protest would be valid. Nevertheless it seems to me the Christian cannot accept it as final. His understanding of the past must be informed by the same faith which is the ground of his hope for the future. This surely means that there will be an organic connection between his history and his hope; and it seems also to imply that the Christian will not wholly share the non-Christian view of history.

What both these books stress, in so far as they are historical, is the historical importance of religion as a factor in the development of civilization. This goes together with a keen realization of the need of a revival of faith if civilization is to be saved. But this realization is quite a different thing from hope; and may indeed strike a chill of despair to our hearts. To realize that we need faith is not the same thing as to have it.

Theological History

I think it is right to stress the importance of Christianity as a factor in historical development, but that is not the thing which it is supremely important for Christians to stress. The important thing is that all the factors of history (material, economic, irreligious as well as religious) have been controlled by God; and the Christian hope of the future is based similarly not on the expectation of a religious revival, but on the certainty that God is omnipotent. Of course all Christians would agree with this; the problem is to give it its cash value in our understanding of history.

It seems to me helpful to start from the Biblical conception of history as the *judgement* of God. I quote from some notes of a sermon delivered in Oxford last year by Professor C. H. Dodd :

"History is the field in which moral persons choose freely. But that freedom is exercised within a *moral order* fixed by God's decree. Here is the biblical formula : See I have set before you this day life and good and death and evil, therefore—choose. The choice is real. We are not free to choose life and evil, that is something fixed in the nature of things, which we can't alter. When, therefore, events work out to a catastrophe which is obviously the way of death, it exposes the true character of the action that has led to this disastrous consequence—exposes it as evil. It was the work of the prophets thus to interpret the disasters that fell upon their people as the judgement of God upon their wickedness. It may be that they oversimplified. In particular, most of the O.T. writers assumed that the disastrous consequences of evil doing fell upon the guilty. Only here and there are hints of the truth, which the N.T. brings out so clearly : that the suffering which falls upon the innocent is an even clearer exhibition of the horrible working of sin, and therefore an even clearer revelation of God's judgement. In this large sense, then, we may accept the assurance of the Bible as a whole, that in the great crises of history, with the horrors that accompany them, "the judgements of the Lord are in the earth." In the present century we have seen—we are even now passing through—evidence of God's judgement upon human sin as clear and undeniable as those which moved the prophets to write in the two fateful centuries 750–550 B.C. But . . . judgement is a term which belongs to man's *rational* process. The crisis is not effectively judgement unless it is *accepted as such*, ex animo : accepted in contrition, humility and repentance. This is the first way in which God's call and challenge come to men in society. It is a word of judgement expressed in the actual facts of the situation."

The key-sentence for our purpose seems to be the last. The word of judgement is "expressed in the actual facts of the situation". It brings home and amplifies the point already made. What is necessary for the Christian viewpoint is to stress the importance not of religion as a factor in history, but of God as controller of all factors. But, it

will be asked, how is this insight to influence our actual writing of history? This is the crucial question, and I admit that all I am doing in this paper is to ask it, not to answer it. Part of the answer, I suggest, is "It has already influenced it". The reverence for fact as such, for "what actually happened", which is the special characteristic of modern historical writing (even if it is not quite without parallels elsewhere), must surely have been derived historically from the atmosphere of Christian belief, for which all events, even those apparently most remote from religion, were willed by God. But I question whether this means that the Christian historian can be content to go on undisturbed in his inherited tradition and methods. (He will be disturbed, if by nothing else, by the rival claims of Marxist histories.) Perhaps it will turn out that the modern professional tradition of historical writing is a part of what Dr. McLeod calls "Christendom", the Christian culture on which the modern world has lived, but which is now disintegrating. As Christians generally are finding themselves less and less at home in this world, and are driven more and more to have recourse to the transcendent sources of their faith, perhaps the Christian historian will have to do something analogous.

Christian Hope

The nature of Christian hope in historical matters may be illustrated from a further passage from Professor Dodd:

"But the Bible has something further to say, which is much more remarkable, and it is this: *that the other side of judgement is forgiveness.* I mean the other side, as one might speak of the two sides of a penny. Forgiveness clearly is meaningless without moral valuation, i.e., judgement; but also . . . God being what He is, judgement carries forgiveness with it to those who accept the judgement. Everyone who knows himself to stand under God's judgement and accepts his standing, is within God's forgiveness. By forgiveness I don't mean simply the relief of the burden of conscience—God's forgiveness is actual power of renewal. It embodies itself in facts just as much as judgement does. The prophets saw the restoration of Jerusalem as being, actually, God's act of forgiving His people for

their sins : it sprang directly out of their restored relation to God. And those who in various ways were found guilty of the death of Christ, found forgiveness in the fact of their inclusion in a new, active, beneficent community, in which they were themselves new men and faced new tasks and achievements. The foundation of the Church was a supreme act of forgiveness . . .”

God's forgiveness “embodies itself in facts just as much as judgement does”, and is “actual power of renewal” to those who accept the judgement. Whether we look to the future with hope or with despondency depends perhaps upon what we want most. Do we want chiefly the preservation of civilization, or do we want renewal by God's judgement and on God's terms? If the latter, we shall have a sure basis of hope (the note entitled “The End of Fear” on pp. 130-1 of *Frontier* No. 4 of last April contained a similar argument, if I have understood it rightly). But if the former, we are bound to be anxious, and even belief in God will not relieve us of our anxiety, for we cannot know that God will certainly preserve civilization. (Toynbee's essay on “Christianity and Civilization” in *Civilization on Trial* contains the suggestion that Western Civilization may neither be prolonged nor replaced *by another civilization*.)

Perhaps the story of the rich young Ruler is relevant to our situation. He “went away grieved; for he had great possessions”. But that fact would not have grieved him, if his great possessions had not held the highest place in his regard. If renewal had been what he wanted most, Christ's command would have caused him joy. Perhaps civilization is to us (still) what his great possessions were to the young man, and that is why we are “grieved” in our historical thinking when we look to the future.

(If, as seems unavoidable for a Christian, we should make God and not civilization the basis of our hope for the future; is it possible that the change now required of the Christian historian is that he should make God and not civilization the key to his understanding of the past?)

MICHAEL FOSTER.

YOUTH OFF DUTY

LOOK in at any pin-table saloon between six and ten, and the chances are that it will be filled with aimless looking youths : the picture house queues on a Sunday afternoon are three-quarters made up of the under-twenties : dance halls are full of teen-age girls who seem to attend every night of the week : crimes of violence committed by 18- and 19-year-olds figure in every newspaper.

It is on this sort of faulty observation that much of the present criticism of youth is founded : and it is to this sort of observation that the recently published survey of Birmingham youth¹ should provide a reliable antidote. On average, it points out, those without clubs to go to spend three evenings in every week at home, and those with clubs spend rather more time than this either at their home or at their organization. Visits to the cinema work out at about three a fortnight, and to the dance hall at only one a fortnight. One person in seven goes to classes at Evening Institutes, and one in four has a connexion with a church. Again, less than one in ten ever spends money on gambling, and less than half the boys and a third of the girls ever smoke.

All such information tends to put visits to dance halls and cinemas into better proportion, and, if for this reason alone, we should be very grateful for this new survey. In it the normal and the average are regarded as more important than the sensational. And the investigation is sufficiently large in scale to give to its results wider validity than many admirable surveys that have provided interesting results but from a possibly biassed sample. Children, of course, are easy game for experiments. Compared with the difficulties of "adult" sociology with its knocking on

¹ *Eighty Thousand Adolescents*. A study of young people in the city of Birmingham by the staff and students of Westhill Training College. Directed and described by Bryan H. Reed, B.D. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

suspicious strangers' doors, how easy it is to get the cooperation of a teacher friend and obtain a whole classful of interviews at once. How easy, and how very often misleading!

The Westhill survey is not of course unique in its reliability and indeed cannot be compared with the "Children Out of School" report of the Social Survey¹ which is shortly to be released. But although the Government study was on a national basis while the Birmingham one was more localized, nevertheless the latter does include much that the purely questionnaire approach of the Social Survey was unable to encompass.

The Youth Clubs

Good as it is, *Eighty Thousand Adolescents* cannot be said to be the report of a survey that is entirely without fault. It argues, for instance, and argues convincingly, that there is a vital need not merely for clubs but for clubs with a specific and clear cut purpose and with less emphasis on such pastimes as table tennis and dancing. It argues, too, that adolescents should play a part in the organization of their own clubs. But while it cites examples of clubs started by teen-agers themselves, and while it says that club education should embrace hot jazz as well as classical music, it still concerns itself solely with clubs organized *from above*. By this standard it comes to the conclusion that about half Birmingham's youth is in some form of club (compared to a Social Survey estimate for the under-sixteens of nearer 75 per cent). Yet the report admits that many of the 50 per cent of adolescents regarded as "unattached" may belong to Youth Hostel Associations or to "Harriers, Pigeon Clubs, Works Football Teams, Bible Classes, Model Aero Clubs, Bands of Hope, a Bird Watching Society, a British Railway Association, and even a Weight-lifting Club, and a Frank Sinatra Fan Club."

¹ "Children Out of School", by Joyce Ward, The Social Survey.

More important than these clubs—many of them presumably run by adolescents themselves—are the cycle speedway clubs. There is a picture of one of these in the book but no reference to it in the text. These clubs are entirely self-generated but in many cases have given rise to most remarkable efforts of organization and finance-raising: a full scale league is now in operation. Certainly they do not conform to the six standards set up by Mr. Reed for the ideal club (these will be referred to later) but they come nearer to them than many clubs that he regards as “official”.

“Adult” Prejudices

This official “adult” thinking blights this book in a number of places, though far less seriously than it blights most work in the youth field. “Adult” thinking assumes, very often unreasonably, that what adults have decided to be good for children ought to be liked by them. We in our wisdom think that Frank Sinatra is not likely to create the same life-long enthusiasm as Bach: but we forget that the actual *experience* gained in organizing a fan club is as good as that gained in a classical music group.

There is also the tendency, from which hardly anybody is free in these days, to assume that new-fangled amusements are wrong until proved otherwise. Particularly is this true of the cinema: despite the findings of the Wheare Committee¹ which, with one dissentient member, could find no definite connexion between cinema going and juvenile delinquency, there is still a widespread atmosphere of superior condescension about films. But it is surely by no means impossible for the cinema to be a decided influence *for good* on the young: is it not possible, for example, that a film like “The Blue Lamp” is a far greater incentive to recruitment to the police than it is to the ranks of the spivs?

Apart from questions on reasons for leaving clubs and on the problems of mixed clubs, no mention is made in this

¹ Report of the Departmental Committee on Children and the Cinema. H.M.S.O. Cmd 7945.

report of what club members themselves think of their own leaders, their own premises, the purpose of their own clubs, or even their own feelings about the way they spend their leisure. This is another example of "adult" thinking. The report allows youth to say what it does, but not what it *thinks*; its thinking is better done for it. In this respect at least, the pamphlet "*Hours Away from Work*"¹ is rather wiser, although the questions asked in that survey were still rather elementary.

"*Intellectual Poverty*" ?

To the present writer, however, the most questionable judgment of the Westhill survey is that it is "depressing" and "astonishing" to see the extent of illiteracy and "sheer intellectual poverty" among these young people.

Doubtless from one point of view it is a sign of intellectual poverty that about one adolescent in four has not read a book for six months or more. But a survey of reading in a London borough showed that half the *adults* interviewed never read at all, and that youth in fact read more than almost any other group. Similarly the overwhelming popularity among children of the *News of the World*, the *Sunday Pictorial* and the *Daily Mirror* simply reflects the enormous adult circulations of these three papers. Only one in a thousand adolescents listens to the Third Programme: is the percentage very much higher among their parents? And certainly these youths do not show the apathy that drives one in ten of their elders to say either that they never have any spare time or that, if they have, they do nothing with it.

The activities and mental attainments of youth may be depressing *ideally*, but they are not so by contemporary standards. This would only be the case if it could clearly be proved that *fewer* people are now literate or interested in

¹ *Hours Away from Work*. A Study of Interests, published for the National Association of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs by the National Council of Social Service Incorporated.

good music than, say, before the war. But this seems unlikely. In at least some libraries the issue of tickets to children has increased by more than 30 per cent since 1938. Westhill's own survey records that 1,500 children normally attend special orchestral concerts—has this a pre-war parallel? Progress seems to be towards the ideal rather than away from it.

The Leaders of Youth

One point of particular importance is the emphasis that the report lays on the fact that the church is still a major influence in the leisure of youth. At least one in four of the youths interviewed in this survey had some connexion with a church either through a club or through attending Sunday services, and the Government inquiry on the under-sixteens showed a half of their sample going to church or Sunday school. Such facts as these are often overlooked by those who argue that the church is losing all its power over youth. What in fact seems to be happening is that fewer are now attached to the church simply as a result of convention. Eighty-five per cent of adults to-day say that they themselves went to Sunday school, but there is no evidence that compulsory churchgoing has had any particularly good effect on most of them. The lower proportion of adolescents who go to-day, on the other hand, probably contains a far higher percentage who go of their own inclination and are therefore far more receptive to the message that they receive.

This article, like most of the Press reports of this book, has tended to concentrate on the chapters of the survey that concern the actual habits of eighty thousand adolescents. In fact, only one chapter out of twelve in this book has the general pattern of leisure as its subject, and the remaining eleven discuss, for the most part, the quality and content of the local youth service. Strongly stressed here is the vital importance of the "sixteen break" (when adolescents' attitudes change and there is a sharp falling off in club

membership), and the importance of some aim and purpose in all clubs. On the latter point Mr. Reed writes :—

“ If the Youth Service is to fulfil the kind of purpose of which we are thinking in this chapter, it must provide within itself an experience of democratic living, it must help young people to discover significance in their daily life, it must contribute to the strengthening enrichment of home life, it must enlist young people in service to the community, it must offer them general training for future unspecified service, and it must provide education in citizenship.”

The attainment of all such aims needs inspired leadership, and it is perhaps on this subject that one feels that the report is most reticent—while not entirely refraining from criticism of leaders, most of the reproof is in wide and vague terms. Yet if the clubs that now cater for half the youth of Birmingham are also to provide for the other half, it will be essential to have more and better leaders, however much the adolescents themselves help in the organization. A recent appeal by the Lord Mayor to the 1,100,000 people of Birmingham for helpers in youth work produced only thirty-five offers of help, of which only twenty-nine became effective. And there is no evidence that even these twenty-nine were the people best fitted to be youth leaders. Even if it is no longer true that schoolmastering is the last resort of failures in other professions, it may still be true that many people turn their hand to controlling youth simply because they have never succeeded in controlling anyone else.

A vital survey, complementary to the present one, should in fact pay the same attention to youth leaders as this one pays to youth itself. Certainly the whole Youth Service has a long and heavy job ahead of it if it is to instil youth with a sense of purpose, and to attract those who as yet have no interest in life beyond table tennis and lounging on street corners ; and certainly, too, the educational programme needed to abolish “ intellectual poverty ” is a considerable one. All the same *Eighty Thousand Adolescents* seems, to the present writer at least, to add weight to the argument that there is little more wrong with present day youth than there is with most of the people who criticize them.

LEONARD ENGLAND.

"THE COCKTAIL PARTY"

DRAMATIC and literary events are not likely very often to find room in this journal, and few things are less typical of its interests than cocktail parties. But Mr. T. S. Eliot's latest and most popularly successful play has a special claim on its attention, for this work presents a special case of what is meant by "frontier" activity. One thing about a frontier is that the people on the one side and on the other may not have the same language: it is a place where thought may have to be translated to be communicated. Here is an example of what this means, though it has nothing directly to do with the play in question—

Just about ten years ago, a young French workman was hurrying into the country out of an industrial town which was swarming like an overturned ant-hill. A compatriot of another class, also fleeing from the invaders, got into conversation with him; and as they passed a wayside crucifix the young labourer enquired, What is that? He had no idea, and it was no light task to enlighten him, for this inhabitant of a factory area in cathedral-conscious France turned out to be as totally ignorant of religious knowledge of any kind as many of his opposite numbers in Britain are said to be. The French pastor who told us this story said that when he first went to preach the gospel to the unchurched in just such an area as this young man had come from, he had been thoroughly scared (*effaré*) to find the name of God received with hoots, any reference to Christ with vacant grins, and words like sin and salvation apparently meaningless. That was why he had given up his pastorate and taken to a technique of evangelization which began by the total avoidance of all traditional sacred language. He was using moving pictures of contemporary life in which these people were interested, proceeding thence to the discussion of similar situations of their personal lives, to the emotions and tensions that these created, and finally

to the religious truths by which alone they could be understood. Methods of teaching similar in principle but various in technique are being revived elsewhere on the continent of Europe. Here the task is to arouse, by imaginative experience, a sense of the spiritual realities to which the words of revealed religion apply.

But there is another public, in a rather different case ; which may be familiar enough with Biblical words and religious statements but mistakes their meaning, or thinks it knows they are meaningless, and why ; and it may be even more fruitless than in the former case to attempt to open communication in those terms. To bring such minds to understand what they misunderstand, an ideal method would again be the dramatic presentment of a human situation with which they would spontaneously identify their own past or present experience ; one in which they would also be enabled to imagine the disposition of soul to which the words of revelation are addressed. And for this, as Hamlet said, the play's the thing.

It is a play of this kind that Mr. Eliot has achieved in *The Cocktail Party*. His intentions may have been, more simply, those which Hamlet defined—"to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure"—but since the "form and pressure" are of the present moment (no play could be more instantly of its date) and the poet is a Christian, what he has produced is a moving statement of the eternal human dilemma in the form of a contemporary comedy. The members of the social group he portrays are the sick in soul in need of the physician, and a physician is provided in the disguise of a psycho-analyst who spends his time awakening them to such self-knowledge as they can bear. The religious life itself proceeds in the background, off-stage ; it is "the sanatorium" in which life and death have other meanings. Yet it is from the "sanatorium" that the light of meaning shines into the play, giving to the irrelevant lives of the

characters such significance as they have. There are no Christian words to distract attention, though there are two symbolic gestures and the final scene is enacted under the shadow of an actual crucifixion, which has just happened on the other side of the globe. It may seem excessive to say that this drama portrays the operation of grace, raising men and women by the mystery of conscience out of the murky depths of psychological perdition ; yet in truth that is what it does.

The characters are, with two exceptions, ordinary members of our extraordinary metropolitan society, where sin is assessed in terms of psychological disturbance and hell is experienced as "nervous breakdown". There is an ordinary predicament of a husband and wife who married for the wrong reasons and are both seeking perilous consolation in extraneous love affairs. But the wife's adventure founders because the young man she affects falls devotedly in love with a young lady who is no less profoundly enamoured of the husband. The wife finds she has then leapt out of the frying-pan of being unloved into the hell-fire of fear that she is unlovable : and in desperation she not only goes to the psycho-analyst but "walks out on" her husband. This makes his predicament equally grave : for her desertion apparently removes the impediment to his union with the young woman he has encouraged to love him, and when she challenges him to fulfil the implied commitment he realizes that he does not want to. The relatively mild purgatory of having a wife he does not love is immediately changed into the damnation of discovery that he is incapable of loving.

In this showdown the loves of all four principals are put to the test, each in a different way and each is found wanting. The married couple have unconsciously taken each other merely to adorn fantasies of their own personalities, and, in seeking lovers elsewhere, they are doomed to discover that they were only trying to do the same thing again—or (as but one character in the play spontaneously realizes) to

commit the same sin. No poet surely has more precisely and delicately realized upon the stage that element of self-projection which is the hidden serpent in every paradise of instinctive love, yet with full understanding that this element is not the whole. To the younger woman, the experience of love was in itself a revelation of something so much larger than life that her belief in it survives disillusionment about its object: indeed the love itself is exalted; it is the world that is degraded by the discovery that love had been misapplied—"that we had merely made use of each other". She feels as if all the world now consists only of separated, unrelated egos—

. . . it isn't that I *want* to be alone,
But that everyone's alone—or so it seems to me.
They make noises, and think they understand each other.
And I'm sure that they don't. Is that a delusion?

In what we take for delusions, the doctor tells her, there may be something "we have to accept and go on from". But in what remains from the experience of love there is a truth that is still harder to accept—

For what happened is remembered like a dream
In which one is exalted by intensity of loving
In the spirit, a vibration of delight
Without desire, for desire is fulfilled
In the delight of loving. A state one does not know
When awake. But what, or whom I loved,
Or what in me was loving, I do not know.

This, if it is real, she wants to find again: or, if it is meaningless, to be cured of the sense of sin and shame felt because she cannot attain it. That is her dilemma. She is told she can solve it either way. She can be "reconciled to the human condition". Or, if she has the courage, and can burn all her boats with "the kind of faith that issues from despair", then she can "take the way that leads towards possession of what you have sought for in the wrong place". Neither way is better; but you cannot have both, you must choose. She decides for the unknown way to the un-

limited prize, and is accordingly sent to the "sanatorium"—which, for her, leads to service in a missionary order and a death by martyrdom in frightful circumstances.

The news of this death after two years comes to the same company at the same house, holding the same kind of party as in the first scene of the play. Everything is materially the same, but psychologically different: host and hostess are now reconciled,

Are contented with the morning that separates
And with the evening that brings them together
For a casual talk before the fire,
Two people who know they do not understand each other,
Breeding children whom they do not understand
And who will never understand them.

This, the psycho-analyst had said, could be "a good life" and it has become transformed because they are now able to live it without falsity or subterfuge; the spiritual climate has been changed. In time to come, no doubt, there will be theological criticism of this play and a point of dispute will be whether it represents a "double standard" of salvation, that of the "sanatorium" and that of the psychologist. But, allowing for the necessary limitations of dramatic form, all that the author clearly implies is the diversity of spiritual gifts and capabilities, and that the valorization of all of them depends upon the same power that manifests itself most clearly in lives that are dedicated to love, in and for itself alone. Two of the characters whose interests in life seem discursive and worldly enough for any cocktail party, and whose contribution to the comedy is on the ludicrous side, are gradually disclosed as accomplices of the psychological doctor, a sort of acolytes to his priestly rôle, persons who have some kind of conscious relation to the life of the "sanatorium". In retrospect, they seem to have been symbolizing the operation of "the church in the world", both in the astuteness and the stupidities sometimes ascribed to that sphere of activity.

The work is controversial on the other side, too, and has not escaped inimical and scornful criticism. Not everyone can be expected to put up with such a skeleton at a cocktail party, even for the sake of the dry wit and humour with which the play abounds. In an age like ours, full of matrimonial misfits and revolts, many must be fascinated by the psychological mastery displayed in the quarrel between the faithless spouses, but many must also have their withers too much wrung for enjoyment. The fact remains that the play fills the theatres at which it appears : the audience for whom it is written understand it because it understands them, and because it realizes, in terms of their own life and language, something of the spirit that searches the hearts and the reins ; because it demonstrates anew the purification of the heart through love, and shows the triumph of love over both life and death, under the sign of the Cross.

It is for others, elsewhere, to discuss this work as a poem ; but the language of which the poet has made himself a master is perfectly suited to the work of communication we have been discussing. Perhaps hardly any but experts are aware, except at a few moments, that what they are listening to is poetry. There is not a word which people of this kind in such circumstances do not commonly use ; the diction descends occasionally to an intentional flatness, and at its most moving it is still the speech that the characters presented might use, though of course in life they never use it so well. This is the consummate art that conceals art ; common speech so refined and perfected that the listener is just sufficiently uplifted by it into the mood of poetry, to become directly susceptible to the ideas the poet means to convey.

P. M.

REVIEWS

Everyman's Talmud. By the Rev. Dr. A. COHEN. (J.M. Dent, 12/6.)

This is a revised edition of a work first published in 1932 and designed to provide the general English reader with a fairly comprehensive survey of post-Biblical official Jewish teaching. The fact that the book has passed through three reprintings before the present revised edition indicates the wide appreciation of its value. Apart from its usefulness as a reference work this book provides interesting material for general reading and more particularly for a dispassionate study of extra-Biblical Jewish doctrine on the various subjects connected with religion and ethics, law and folklore.

One of the most formidable barriers that divide men of different faiths is ignorance. And dialogue or discussion, by far the most satisfactory way of breaking down this barrier, is not possible always or for all. Resort has to be made therefore to the written word, and here at once the difficulty of language is met. Jews and Christians share the Old Testament as Holy Scripture, but whereas these books are available in a multitude of translations the same cannot be said for non-Biblical doctrinal writings, either Christian or Jewish. Probably Jews are better situated in this respect than Christians; they are better acquainted with the languages of Christian literature than are Christians with the various types of Hebrew, the language of Judaism. Jewish-Christian relations have improved beyond all recognition during the first half of the present century. But there is still room for much improvement, and this volume should assist materially in the promotion of mutual understanding between these two communities.

Dr. Cohen in his Preface is perfectly frank. He recognizes the extreme difficulty of his task and the vast extent of the field, but claims to have tried to indicate wherever possible what he calls "the representative opinion of the Rabbis". He has sought to be impartial and has included "harsh utterances, which traducers of the Rabbis are fond of quoting" as well as "citations which read well and show the Talmud in a favourable light". He warns the newcomer against judging the teachings of the Rabbis by modern standards, and rightly says that they must be understood against the background of the age in which they were propounded. There is a useful Introduction setting out clearly the historical antecedents of the Talmud and also explaining its structure and describing briefly its component parts. A bibliography is provided for the use of those who wish to delve deeper into this fascinating study.

This book is not a translation of the Talmud. Such would have been beyond the scope of a single popular volume, and in any case is being provided elsewhere. Rather is this a well documented exposition of the doctrines of the Talmud in ten chapters, each with numerous subsections, dealing with the doctrines of God, the Universe, Man, Revelation, Domestic, Social, Moral, and Physical Life, Folklore, Jurisprudence, and the Hereafter. It will at once be realized that here is a mine of information from which the interested and studious reader will be able to dig authoritative statements on Jewish faith and practice. Although the period of Jewish history here covered is the "formative period, extending from the third century B.C. to the end of the fifth century A.D." it was this period "which witnessed the development of the Mosaic and prophetic dispensations into the Judaism which has survived to the present day".

C. WITTON-DAVIES.

From the Ground Up. JORIAN JENKS. (Hollis & Carter. 12s. 6d.).

"Then shall the earth yield her increase" (Ps. 67, A.V.). The psalmist was aware of terms and conditions. Life and living forces alone can yield an increase and we are being made aware that in things organic we have not the mastery. We are judged by laws not of our own making. This is a matter which involves the whole life of man and not only the way in which he produces his food.

Questions of the right relationship between man and man naturally and rightly occupy a great deal of public attention to-day. In our time, however, mainly because of the enormous power we have, it is no less essential for us to discover the right relationship between man and the earth, between soil and society. If we can get that relation in good order our foundations, at least, will be stable. Whereas we thought we had reason to believe in inevitable progress, we now have cause to wonder whether our civilization is capable even of surviving. For those who wish to study the causes of this apprehension and the way out of it, Mr. Jorian Jenks has just written a valuable book called *From the Ground up*. The author is a farmer of wide and long experience, the editor of *Rural Economy*, and in this latest work of his we have a fairly complete text book on the organic way of life.

Well acquainted with organic farming, Mr. Jenks is able to look at the whole of life from that point of view. He can see the difference

between *agriculture* and *agri-industry*; between economy and "economics"; between a whole and the total of fragmented parts; between the use of machines and mechanization; between the use of money and the abuse of "sound finance". It is not easy to expound these differences in the printed word, but that is what Mr. Jenks succeeds in doing. In farming, in economy, in social solidarity, even in the relation of all these to religion and the whole community, the case for review, re-interpretation and regeneration is soundly and steadily built up. It is a book that deserves to be widely read.

In the very nature of things our lives and living must be built "from the ground up". But "As an increasing proportion of human society becomes detached from the soil, cultural retrogression is almost inevitable. Men become isolated from any ecological context, increasingly mobile, over-confident in human cleverness, biologically irresponsible. They develop a tendency to consume rather than create, to take rather than give, to construct rather than cultivate. In short, they are in danger of reverting to predatory, nomadic habits, living by capture" (p. 21).

This tendency to "consume rather than create." is the fundamental cause of man-made soil erosion, it expresses the character of modern man; in the end it must destroy us unless we can mend our ways. "And so the question which really confronts us at this time of crisis and transition is this: How long can we continue to force life to adjust itself to the requirements and the performance of machinery, and base our economic plans on the promise that technology can solve all problems for us? Can we not recognize in time that a good standard of living predicates an understanding and an acknowledgement of the terms on which life is lived, and that technological means must be subordinated to vital ends?" (p. 86).

Mr. Massingham says in his introduction that no such revaluation can occur without a religious, Christian partnership with an organic economy. This is a matter which deserves the attention of the Church, particularly of its executive leaders. It is not necessary to plunge into the haggle about organic v. chemical "manures". Artificials may be no worse than modern milling, centralized brewing, and many other forms of mass-production which have had destructive effects on local community. But at this time we need help from the keepers of our conscience. For example, if we can get our food anyhow, somehow or other, is it all right to disregard the rape of the earth? If God is the Father creator, what difference does this make to our treatment

of the creation? Our Father's will *in* (not only *on*) earth must be our concern. Can we go on without taking more trouble to understand what it is?

RALPH COWARD.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Dear Sirs,

I should like to make a comment concerning the possibility of the revival of flogging as a penalty in view of your remarks in *The Frontier* for May, 1950.

There are two methods of approach to the problem which I should designate as the long-term and the short-term attitudes. On a long-term view, flogging is a confession of personal failure and the remedies for crime lie in the removal of its causes and in the reformation of the criminal. For example, a constructive approach to the problem of juvenile crime lies along the road of developing more boys' clubs and the like. But, as Lord Simon said recently in the House of Lords, it is small consolation, if one lies stunned and bleeding from a "cosh" blow, to know* that ultimately there may be more social clubs and efforts for reform as a result of the attack! From the short-term viewpoint, there has been an alarming use of violence by criminals during the post-war period. Some have not hesitated to shoot if needs be whilst others have committed violent and aggravated assaults for purposes of gain. It may be true that there has not been an exact statistical increase in the number of these crimes over recent months. But, as Lord Goddard has implied, statistics do not prove everything. There have been a large number of crimes of violence and the citizen must be concerned with the quality of the crime. Under the former system, the judge has two courses open to him. He could sentence the criminal to be detained for a very long while. But a sentence of ten years penal servitude usually means that the man is relegated of necessity to the criminal classes for life. A shorter sentence together with flogging, the second alternative, could mean possibilities of a deterrent and of reformation. It must also be recalled that it was usually the more hardened criminal who was sentenced to be flogged. The judge now only has the former alternative available to him and it may be questioned how far the change is really ultimately beneficial to the convicted person.

In any argument, it should be made absolutely clear that the use of flogging is only suggested for crimes of aggravated violence. There is no suggestion of reviving it upon the scale once practised. Again, every effort should be made to prevent a mere revenge-motive creeping in or to prevent the encouragement of public sadism. The latter point is one of the more serious. In 1938, some young thugs committed a violent and murderous assault upon a London jeweller and were sentenced to be flogged. The more sensational Sunday press described the details which would result from the sentence and even the date and time at which it would be carried out. As a result, sensationalism was linked with revenge and sadism. But the fault here lay with certain newspapers which encouraged a wholly wrong approach to the particular sentence. If the use of "the cat" should be revived, care must be taken in this matter. The restrictions put upon reporting Divorce Court proceedings suggest that some legal restriction upon sensationalism should not be impossible.

For the Christian, nobody must be wholly given up and the possibilities of reform must be seen in every man. But society has a right to be protected and it is an unfortunate fact that "the cat" is the only type of language which some of its more degraded members are capable of understanding. Again, care for reformation of the criminal should not be allowed to create an apparent forgetfulness of the sufferings of his innocent victim and of the possibly maimed life which has resulted from his act. In several recent cases, a consideration of the matter from the victim's viewpoint suggests the need for condign punishment. Unless it be held that Christian ethics demand an absolute standard of pacifism, the use of force to punish and deter from crime within a society stands upon the same ethical level as its use to prevent the overrunning of Europe by a criminal group, such as were the Nazis.

Conditioned by the circumstances of society at its existing ethical level, corporal punishment would seem to be permissible in terms of Christian ethics. The Gospels do contain an account of the cleansing of the Temple! In the same way, whilst well aware that the fact has been denied, I find it very difficult to believe that the threat of "the cat" has not, in the past, prevented some potential gangsters from turning into actual specimens of the craft. Certainly, at a famous assize in Liverpool some years ago, the late Mr. Justice Day, himself a devout Roman Catholic, thought far otherwise when called upon to deal with the atrocious crime of garrotting. In the abnormal circumstances of

a post-war crime wave, Mr. Justice Day's methods may have much to commend them to-day. Let us carry on with the work of reformation by all means. More clubs are needed just as more police must be recruited. There is every necessity to do away with the environment which creates crime, including the training of men to use violence and hate as methods of waging war. These wholly non-Christian factors, bound up as they are with a prevailing economic system, have probably done much indirectly to breed the gangsters of the moment. But society must also be protected against the gangsters already evolved within its midst and the use of "the cat" is at least a potent weapon directed to this end.

F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT.

THE FAMILY

Dear Sirs,

On p. 172 of the *Frontier* you quote a saying about Austrian politics. I am sorry to spoil your illustration, but wasn't the true form of the saying, "In Germany things are serious, but not hopeless; in Austria, they are hopeless, but not serious"? I have been told that this was perfectly true of the two countries in the 1920's.

Incidentally you seem to me on p. 166 to have jumped rather quickly from crime to the family. The increase in crime is something small and quite possibly temporary, whereas the decay of the family has been going on for a generation. Moreover will crime be stopped or much good be done merely by encouraging families to hold together? The question will then arise, what sort of families are we encouraging? The present housing shortage compels people to live in larger units, but because people have lost the art of living together in families the only result is to set people at loggerheads and break up marriages. Many people become criminals not because they had no family life but because it was of the wrong kind.

J. M. Ross.

[This is true: but our concern in the Editorials criticized was not that of "merely encouraging families to hold together"; it was for the establishment of social conditions in which the normal desire to found and rear families will be effectively renewed.—Eds.]

GOD AND SCIENCE

by

John W. Doorly

"This highly metaphysical work declares that Jesus was the supreme exponent of the science illustrated in the Bible. It was His exact understanding of spiritual law that enabled Him to give to the world that TRUTH that makes us free—free to still the tempest in our lives, free to cleanse the leprosy of present-day conditions, free, in fact, to raise the spiritually dead to the only life that is true life."

(Yorkshire Observer).

10s. 6d.

THE FOUNDATIONAL BOOK COMPANY LTD
245 KNIGHTSBRIDGE, LONDON, S.W. 7

Verdict on Jesus

LESLIE S. R. BADHAM, M.A.

A reverent, and yet critical, examination of the claims of Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. The book is specially valuable to all teachers and others engaged in the training of to-day's youth.

9s. 6d.

The Genius of Europe

HAVELOCK ELLIS

Mature reflections, hitherto unpublished, on the underlying characteristics which make up the soul of a race, and their manifestation in literature and the arts.

12s. 6d.

WILLIAMS AND NORGATE LTD
36 Gt. Russell Street, London, W.C. 1

CHRISTENDOM

A Journal of Christian Sociology

Edited by Maurice B. Reckitt

Annual Subscription 7s. 6d.

Contents March Issue

After the Poll

Notes and Comments

Christian Democracy in the English Situation

Religious Belief in Brussels Slum

In Memoriam—Keble Talbot, C.R.

The Challenge of the Moment—Then and Now

A specimen copy will be sent on request

WORDSWORTH

A Tribute

By George Mallaby

With an Introduction by Prof. H. W. Garrod
Cr. 8vo. *7s. 6d. net*

THIS tribute of admiration and gratitude for the poetry of Wordsworth is written in honour of the Centenary of the poet's death by a man who, over a period of thirty busy and eventful years, has found in it continuous pleasure, consolation and strength. The book steers clear of psychological theory, biographical detail and learned criticism. The author tries simply to understand Wordsworth's poetic power, to explain the daily happiness he has derived from it and to share that happiness with others.

BASIL BLACKWELL . OXFORD

RELIGION AND THE NEW PAGANISM

JOHN PITTS

"Dr. Pitts writes from America, and he writes about the drift from religion, the effect of machinery on our minds, the influence of Freud whispering that our greatest hopes are infantile screams in the dark for a security which we can never find, and of a materialistic philosophy saying with T. H. Huxley that the universe is nothing more than 'a mud-pie made in the dark by two blind children, Matter and Force'. And it shows how the world is getting very sick of this diet of dust, and wants some food and sunlight and air in which the soul and personality of a man or woman can grow."

JOHN O'LONDON'S WEEKLY

8s. 6d. net

THE DIGNITY OF MAN LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

The *Dignity of Man* is one of the most brilliantly written and closely reasoned of a long series of books in which Dr. Hough has sought to reconcile a proud humanism with a humble evangelical faith.... I can think of no message more timely in an age in which man has so largely lost faith in God and himself."

THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

6s. net

THE CHRISTIAN SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. J. B. HIGGINS

"Dr. Higgins considers in this book some of the reasons put forward nowadays for disregarding the Old Testament and as a kind of cautionary story shows what a travesty of Christianity resulted from Marcion's attempt to reject it.... Any who, owing to misunderstanding, have been tempted to undervalue the Old Testament, are likely to be converted by the general argument here, if not convinced in every particular."

THE FRIEND

8s. 6d. net

INDEPENDENT PRESS LTD.
Memorial Hall, London, E.C. 4

S. J. CURTIS

Ph.D., M.A.

A Short History of Western Philosophy in the Middle Ages

"An admirably clear and straightforward introduction to the subject."—*Nineteenth Century and After*. With a preface by Miss Dorothy L. Sayers.

15s.

F. SHERWOOD TAYLOR

Ph.D., M.A., B.Sc.

Concerning Science

"It is no small merit to state so simply so important a theme."—*Western Mail*. "This study of the effect of science on human life and thought is an able summary of the facts."—*Adelphi*.

6s.

Fiction

SHOLEM ASCH

THE APOSTLE

A novel of the life of St. Paul

"Written with both tact and power... a fascinating book."—C. P. SNOW (*Sunday Times*). "Wonderful writing."—PAMELA HANSFORD JOHNSON (*Daily Telegraph*).

15s.

MACDONALD

& Co. (Publishers) Ltd.

MOWBRAYS' BOOKSHOPS

Any book advertised in *The Frontier* may be obtained from Mowbrays' bookshops by post. Although chiefly concerned with religious books, these bookshops are also well stocked with general literature and with selected children's books. Book Tokens are exchanged and sold.

A. R. MOWBRAY & Co. Ltd.,

28 MARGARET STREET, OXFORD CIRCUS,
LONDON, W. 1.

9 HIGH STREET, OXFORD. 5 ALBION PLACE, LEEDS, 1

39 CANNON STREET, BIRMINGHAM, 2

44 BRAZENNOSE STREET, MANCHESTER, 2